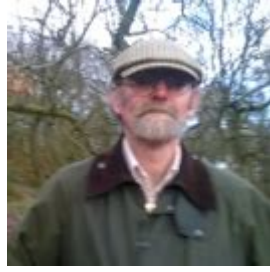

David Myatt: Some Personal Comments



Editorial Note: Collected here are some recent personal comments by David Myatt, all but one of which were posted in 2023 on his wordpress blog, {1} the exception being *Appreciating Classical Literature* posted in 2019.

The comments reveal a person very different from the character portrayed for decades and even to this day by his political enemies who, apparently in their hatred, cannot forgive or forget his extremist past.

A.M.
October 2023

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{1} The blog is at davidmyatt dot wordpress dot com, and since it is a 'free' blog replete with advertisements we advise using the Firefox browser with extensions such as 'noscript' and 'unblock origin' and with images disabled by changing, in Firefox, the preference 'permissions.default.image' in 'about:config' to 2 instead of 1.

Missa Pro Defunctis

What have we in over four and a half centuries to compare, in terms of presencing the numinous, with *Missa pro defunctis* by Francisco Guerrero? Perhaps some music by JS Bach?

Here I am almost half a century since I as part of a choir sang in a public performance of Mozart's Requiem having possibly in those intervening years learnt some things about myself and about our human nature. Who reads, who even cares about such pathei-mathos? Yet such numinous music remains to remind, if only a few, while we en masse as a species seemingly move on to new diversions which betake us further and further from such presencings of the numinous as may ineluctably change and rebirth us as individuals.

September 2023

Memory Of A Beautiful World

One of the pleasures I have found in old age – beyond my three score years and ten – is recalling alone or reminiscing to others about times past. One especial memory is of when a younger version of me was cycling home from work one Summer in Shropshire [1] when I chanced upon someone – a celebrated cycling time-trial champion whom I seem to recall at one time held every RTTC record from 25 miles to 12 hours – while he was out training. We chatted as the comradeship of cycling decreed, and together cycled along together for many miles at over 20mph. A pace I intuitively knew from years of competing in local club and RTTC Time Trials.

But then he gradually increased the pace up to almost 30mph until after a few miles I made some excuse and turned left onto some minor road to collapse onto the grass verge. But it was wonderful, lying there, in the quiet isolation of a country English lane with only the breeze rustling trees and birdsong for company. Then, in those moments, that was my simple, my entire, life. If only – if only – it had lasted; if only – if only – I had somehow in some way managed to make it last so that it and similar moments became my life thereafter.

But it was not alas then to be, for I soon, so soon, returned to the world of extremism, of causal abstractions with its dialectic of opposites which so engendered a supra-personal certitude of knowing and the inevitable suffering of others. And it would take some twenty years for me to recall that – and similar – moments again following the most traumatic incident of my life: the unexpected suicide of my then fiancée, genesis as that incident was of my weltanschauung of pathei-mathos.

Mea Culpa; Mea Culpa, Mea Maxima Culpa. But even now saying that, and Κύριε ελέησον, out loud does not help in these twilight years of my life. For there seems to be no expiation for my extremist past with its certitude of knowing. A certitude of knowing which is glorified even unto this day by others with their -isms and -ologies and the causal abstractions, the often suffering causing dialectic, on which they are based.

May 2023

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[1] I was riding my hack work-bike; a Mercian 531 frame, Cinelli bars and stem; TA double-chainset; Mavic G40 rims with Campag Record hubs; and – a concession to comfort – a Brooks B33 well-broken in saddle.

Holding The Line

One of the matters often pondered upon in the past fifteen years is whether we as a species are in sufficient numbers self-aware enough to not only cease to personally cause suffering but also to contribute to our societies in such a way that we are or become vectors of a duty sufficiently honourable to prevent or to alleviate the suffering of others in some personal manner.

One example of such a duty I have mentioned several times these past fifteen years is a Police officer, such as this mention from 2012:

"I have some forty years experience of interaction with the police, from ordinary constables and detectives, to custody sergeants, to officers from specialist branches such as SO12, SO13, and crime squads. During that time, I have known far more good police officers than bad – corrupt – ones. Furthermore, I realized that most of those I came into contact with were good individuals, motivated by the best of intentions, who were trying to do their best, often under difficult circumstances, and often to help victims of dishonourable deeds, catch those responsible for such deeds, and/or prevent such deeds." *Some Notes on The Politics and Ideology of Hate*

Most of this interaction was the result of the suffering-causing deeds I had personally done or had incited by what I wrote, possessed as I was for some forty years by a certitude of knowing, a fanaticism, born of adhering to, believing in, some supra-personal cause, some -ism or some -ology and that extreme lack of self-awareness that such a certitude cultivates and maintains.

In many ways I was much worse than most political or religious extremists because I was, both as a National Socialist and later as a Muslim, an ideologue meaning, in the case of National Socialism, I often arrogantly spurned guidance and then manufactured new guidelines for myself and for others; and as a Muslim having given a personal pledge of loyalty to a particular person, I supported and justified his cause.

"In truth they, those officers, as one of them once said to me, were guided by what 'was laid down' and did not presume to or tried hard not to overstep their authority; guided as they were by the law, that accumulated received wisdom of what was and is good in society; a law which (at least in Britain and so far as I know) sought to embody a respect for what was fair and which concept of fairness was and always has been (again, at least in Britain and so far as I know) untainted, uncorrupted, by any political ideology.

Now I know, I understand, I appreciate, that for that reason – of so being mindful of the limits of their authority, of being guided by what had been laid down over decades – those people, those police officers, were far better individuals than the arrogant, the hubriatic, extremist I was; an arrogant extremist who by and for himself presumed 'to know' what was right, who presumed to understand, who presumed he possessed the ability, the authority, and the right to judge everyone and everything, and who because of such arrogance, such hubris, most certainly continued to contribute to the cycle of suffering, ignoring thus for so long as he in his unbalance did the wisdom that Aeschylus gave to us in *The Oresteia*." *Some Notes on The Politics and Ideology of Hate*

In regard to part of the initial question of whether there are sufficient numbers of sufficient honourable individuals to prevent or able to alleviate the suffering of others in some personal manner, my fallible answer is that there seems to be just enough to 'hold the line' enabling modern societies in the West to maintain societies which currently just about function despite enduring problems such as poverty, homelessness, social disorder, crime, and corrupt politicians one of whose mottos is "do as we say not as we do" as evident for example by a certain British Prime Minister and his cronies during the Covid pandemic.

But for how long will, or can, this line be held? I do not know but – as I listen to *Kyrie Orbis Factor* as performed by Ensemble Organum – I sadly intuit that our current Western societies are following the natural pattern of decline that all other societies in our human history have undergone mostly as a result of our selfish primitive nature unchanged in our majority as we still seem to be by our own pathei-mathos and by that knowledge which resides in our thousands of years-old human culture of pathei-mathos.

I myself through my extremist decades have contributed to this decline. Too little and too late my own pathei-mathos, drowned out, publicly smothered, as it now seems to me to be, by those who cannot forget or cannot forgive the extremism of my past and who with their hubriatic certitude of knowing about me and others perpetuate the cycle of suffering. Whether they know this or not is yet another question, but I am inclined to believe that they do not know such is their hubris and just as I in my hubris did not know for decades.

August 2023

A Rare Moment

There are few moments that I believed could surprise this somewhat world-weary man beyond his three score and ten mortal years. But some information received from a middle-Eastern contact was one of them.

Knowing my love of classical Arabic music and of how I used to (badly) play the Persian Daf, the information was regarding the Syrian Takht Ensemble [1] whose beautiful traditional music – many employing Maqam modes – and their innovations of such music, brought memories of a different plane of existence, far removed from the turmoil, the Machiavellian machinations, the egoism, the materialistic, and often godless, modern Western world.

I was back in the Sahara Desert where as I once said I wordlessly had intimations of Being, of The Acausal, of The-Unity, of The One-The Only (τὸ ἓν), of The Monas (μονάς) which ‘acausal’ Being Muslims called Allah and Christians called God. I was back in Arabic – Muslim – lands where I had travelled and stayed and learnt. I was back as a novice in a Catholic monastery, wandering outside the Abbey in the contemplative period between chanting Matins and Lauds.

Such a waste for over forty years of such experiencing, such wordless knowing. There are no excuses; for the fault, the hubris, was mine. All I have to offer in recompense, in expiation, is my wordfull weltanschauung of pathei-mathos, which compared to such wordless personal experiencing and such Arabic music is so woefully inadequate.

August 2023

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[1] Al Jazeera documentary: <https://tinyurl.com/3btd2w5v>

One Tree Among Many

Beside the stone wall that marks one of the boundaries of what has for several years been my home is an evergreen Oak; almost a dome of spreading branches and so tall it might well be an hundred or so years in age. The tallest tree around from near where several other and various and tallish specimens of arboreal life provide perches for those whose Dawn Chorus becomes, was, is, a hymnal to such natural Life as has for centuries pleased us.

Two months ago, the Oak was sad; with leaves dry and dying and infested. But now, as clouds break to reveal sky-blue, bringer of early Summer warmth: the tree has that light green of leaf rebirth, and catkins heralds of acorns an English season hence. So there is joy within as this aged man "his foliage drying up and no stronger than a child, with three feet to guide him on his travels, wanders – appearing a shadow in the light of day." [1]

Would that he might hear one more Dawn Chorus to so remember those, these, simple natural beauties of life which he as so many others so easily forgot enwrapped as he, they, were in believed in, in felt, selfish concerns which all will, must, die with us while the Sun again warms each year as it warms and life-sprouting rain seeds rebirth without any interference from us at all.

So I sit, windows of sky and trees to enlighten again my life, listening to a heartbreaking, suspended moment in my measured out so very limited timespan of causal life: the 12th century Cistercian *Répons de Matines pour la fête de saint Bernard*.

6th June 2023

[1] τό θ' ὑπέργερων φυλλάδος ἤδη κατακαρφομένης τρίποδας μὲν ὁδοὺς στείχει, παιδὸς δ' οὐδὲν ἀρείων ὄναρ ἡμερόφαντον ἀλαίνει. Aeschylus, Agamemnon, 79-82. My translation.

Tenebrae

The liturgical season of The Passion is upon us again and I find myself appreciating once more how the numinous allegory of The Passion was presenced in liturgical music from the Graduale *Christus Factus Est* to Vittoria's *Popule meus, quid feci tibi* – Ἅγιος ὁ Θεός, Ἅγιος ἰσχυρός, Ἅγιος ἀθάνατος, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς – to Scarlatti's Stabat Mater to JS Bach's St John and Matthew Passions. And I reminded so movingly of – when a monk – singing Tenebrae amid the flickering then extinguished light of candles...

So much human suffering for so many millennia which the allegory of The Passion of Jesus of Nazareth reminded so many of, century after century; as it reminded me several times in the depths of my decades of extremism. In comparison with such numinous music, liturgical and otherwise, what is my own wordy weltanschauung of pathei-mathos worth?

Very little it now seems to me, if anything at all.

2023

The Hour Before Dawn

It is the hour before Dawn on the Spring Equinox, dark outside, with the Blackbird in the tree at the edge of the garden already singing. No other sounds, as yet, and there arises within me questions I have felt several times in the past few years.

Which are: is what we in a land such as this – a modern Western land such as England as Spring dawns even within, upon, urban conurbations – have acquired, developed, manufactured over the past few hundred years worth the suffering that has been inflicted upon other human beings, upon our forebears, and upon Nature? Is that suffering the price of such societies as we have developed and now seek to maintain?

Numerous overseas conflicts; two World Wars with millions upon millions dead, injured, traumatized, and cities, towns, Nature, destroyed. Numerous invasions and wars since then. Poverty, homelessness, injustice, inequality, crime, still within our lands. Has anything in terms of our humanity, of we being self-controlled, rational, honest and honourable – of ourselves as causes and vectors of suffering – really changed?

It is not as if I am exempt from having caused suffering. My past decades long suffering-causing deeds are my burden and will be until I die.

My personal, fallible, answers born of my pathei-mathos, is that unfortunately we as individuals have not as yet *en masse* changed sufficiently so as to cease to be a cause and a vector of suffering. Tethered as we still apparently are to causal abstractions, to -isms and -ologies, and thus to denotata and the dialectic of opposites, to the conflict that such denotata is the genesis of.

Perhaps we need another hundred, two hundred, or more years. Our perhaps we will continue, *en masse*, as we mostly now are, the eventual extinction of our sometimes stable causal societies of human beings acausally inevitable, fated; until the planet we call Earth finally meets its Cosmic end as all planets do, with we human beings never making real the visionary dream of a few to venture forth and colonize the stars. And even if we did somehow realize that dream, would we venture forth as the still savage, dishonourable, war-mongering species we still are?

Yet all I have in answer, in expiation for my own past suffering-causing deeds, is my weltanschauung of pathei-mathos; so insufficient in so many ways.

March 2023 CE

Appreciating Classical Literature

Having read and once been in possession of a few of the printed published volumes of *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* [1] I seem to at last understand how that continuing scholarly endeavour, begun decades before the First World War, is emblematic of the importance of academic scholarship, and emblematic of the temporal nature of wars and especially of such national and regional conflicts as we have endured, and continue to be involved in, during the past one hundred and fifty years.

Wars, and conflicts, with their human suffering and their often civilian deaths which an appreciation of classical (Ancient Greek and Latin) literature can place into a necessary supra-personal and supra-national perspective.

For the pathei-mathos which such literature – and often the associated mythoi – can impart is of our hubris and our need for the wisdom enshrined in the phrase καλὸς κάγαθός. That is, in the melding of τὸ καλόν (the beautiful) and τὸ ἀγαθόν (the honourable) as in tractate XI:3 of the Corpus Hermeticum:

Ἡ δὲ τοῦ θεοῦ σοφία τί ἔστι;
Τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ τὸ καλὸν καὶ εὐδαιμονία καὶ ἡ πᾶσα ἀρετὴ καὶ ὁ αἰὼν.

But the Sophia of the theos is what?
The noble, the beautiful, good fortune, arête, and Aion. [2]

Where, however, τὸ καλόν refers, in terms of individuals, to not only physical beauty – the beautiful – but also to a particular demeanour indicative of a well-balanced, noble, personal character, as for example mentioned by Xenophon in Hellenica, Book V, 3.9,

πολλοὶ δὲ αὐτῷ καὶ τῶν περιοίκων ἐθελονταὶ καλοὶ κάγαθοι
ἡκολούθουν, καὶ ξένοι τῶν τροφίμων καλουμένων, καὶ νόθοι τῶν
Σπαρτιατῶν, μάλα εὐειδεῖς τε καὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει καλῶν οὐκ ἄπειροι

A personal character which Marcus Tullius Cicero also explained, in his *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*,

Honestum igitur id intellegimus, quod tale est, ut detracta omni utilitate sine ullis praemiis fructibusve per se ipsum possit iure laudari. quod quale sit, non tam definitione, qua sum usus, intellegi potest, quamquam aliquantum potest, quam communi omnium iudicio et optimi cuiusque studiis atque factis, qui permulta ob

eam unam causam faciunt, quia decet, quia rectum, quia honestum est, etsi nullum consecuturum emolumentum vident. (II, 45f)

I am inclined to believe that it is unfortunate that the societies of the modern West no longer consider "a classical education" – the learning of Ancient Greek and Latin, and a study of Ancient Greek and Latin texts such as those of Cicero, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Aristotle – a necessity, as a way to wisdom, as a means to understanding our human physis.

That some individuals, such as the scholars engaged in endeavouring to complete *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, do still appreciate Ancient Greek and Latin texts provides this old man, in the twilight of his life, some comfort, some hope for our human future.

ἀθάνατοι θνητοί, θνητοὶ ἀθάνατοι, ζῶντες τὸν ἐκείνων θάνατον, τὸν δὲ ἐκείνων βίον τεθνεῶτες

The deathless are deathful, the deathful deathless, with one living the other's dying with the other dying in that other's life. [3]

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Extract from a letter to an Oxfordian friend, with footnotes post scriptum

[1] <https://www.thesaurus.badw.de/en/tll-digital/tll-open-access.html>

[2] As I have mentioned in several essays, and in my *Corpus Hermeticum: Eight Tractates: Translation and Commentary*, the theos – ὁ θεὸς – is the chief classical deity (such as Zeus in Ancient Greek mythoi) and should not be understood as equivalent to the monotheistic creator God of Christianity and of the ancient Hebrews. For ὁ θεὸς is not omnipotent, and can be overthrown, as Zeus overthrew Kronos and as Kronos himself overthrew his own father.

[3] Heraclitus, Fragment 62, Diels-Krantz.

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